



Preparing Your Household for Emergencies

Government agencies will respond to community disasters, but the fact remains that citizens may be on their own for hours, even days, after disaster strikes. Citizens are advised to be prepared to take care of themselves for at least three days.

Before disaster strikes

- Have water (preferably in plastic jugs) and canned or non-perishable food (and manual can opener) that does not require cooking.
- Learn first aid and CPR. Have a first aid kit and first aid manual and needed medicines for family members.
- Have blankets or sleeping bags, and plastic sheets or other materials to repair your home or to improvise shelter.
- Have a flashlight with extra bulbs and batteries.
- Have a battery-powered portable radio with extra batteries.
- Have a covered container for a toilet and extra toilet tissue.
- Have a fire extinguisher and know how to use it.
- Learn how to turn off the gas, power, and water in your home.

After the emergency or disaster is over

- Use caution in entering damaged buildings and homes.
- Stay away from damaged electrical wires and wet appliances.
- Check food and water supplies for contamination.
- Notify your relatives that you are safe. However, don't tie up phone lines because they are needed for emergency calls.
- If government disaster assistance is available, the news media will announce where to go to apply.

During an emergency or disaster

- Keep calm, take time to think, give assistance where needed.
- Turn on your radio for official information and instructions.
- Use the telephone only for emergency calls.
- If requested to evacuate, take your emergency supplies and go to a safe location or a temporary shelter as directed by officials.

WASHINGTON
MILITARY
DEPARTMENT



Emergency
Management
Division

www.emd.wa.gov
1-800-562-6108

Building 20, MS: TA-20
Camp Murray, WA
98430-5122

This fact sheet is part of the *Disaster Preparation Handbook 2004* prepared by the Washington State Department of Health and the Washington Military Department's Emergency Management Division.